

Liberal Hearts and Conservative Brains by Ron Lipsman

*A book review*

By Thomas Lindaman\*

It's conventional wisdom that one gets more conservative as he or she gets older. However, conventional wisdom can be unconventional foolishness without something concrete on which to base it. Ron Lipsman attempts to bring some wisdom to conventional wisdom in his new book Liberal Hearts and Conservative Brains: The Correlation Between Age and Political Philosophy.

This was an ambitious project to undertake, and Lipsman acknowledges this early on in the book. With books that revolve around academic research, there is a risk that it will be too dry or overly complicated for the average reader. Lipsman avoids this quite deftly with his writing style. He finds a nice balance between the seriousness and attention to detail of an academic exercise and the light, easy-to-understand prose of a more mainstream political book. This balance proves to be a great strength of the book.

To aid with the more personal touch, Lipsman includes vignettes from his life at the end of the main chapters showing his transformation from liberal to conservative. Through these personal stories, as well as through short tangents in the book itself, we see something that we don't normally see in an Ann Coulter book: a clear, honest examination of why the author believes the way he or she does. Lipsman becomes his own test subject throughout the book, but it's done so seamlessly that it doesn't distract from the overall purpose of the book.

Although Lipsman is an unabashed conservative by his own admission throughout the book, he takes a mostly even hand when discussing the subject matter. Although his political leanings might make some readers and reviewers dismiss Lipsman out of hand, the bulk of the book is both fair and critical to both sides of the political spectrum. Overall, he succeeds in staying neutral.

The book is meant as a hybrid of academic research and mainstream political book, but there are times when the reader will need to know a bit about the nature of academic research to get through some parts of the book. These are few and far between, but they are there, which may turn off some readers who aren't so inclined.

Also, the book has a good flow to it that occasionally gets disrupted by a tangent or a swipe at one side or the other. These moments tend to stick out a bit because of the book's stated purpose and how the information is presented like the flaws in a diamond put against a jeweler's cloth. Although they bring a more human side to the book, they can also be distracting.

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**Liberal Hearts and Conservative Brains: The Correlation Between Age and Political Philosophy**

is a rare book in today's political atmosphere in that it's unbelievably informative and yet accessible enough to be an enjoyable read. Ron Lipsman's ambitious project proves to be a delightful and insightful look into our political past, present, and future with arguments that are hard to refute and a writing style that makes the book hard to put down. In the midst of the rhetorical wars between the left and right, Lipsman's book is an intellectually stimulating breath of fresh rhetorical air.